

THE DISCOVERY OF THE NEST AND EGGS OF *LEUCOSTICTE AUSTRALIS.*

BY F. C. LINCOLN.

*Plate II.*

It has become the pleasure of the writer to place on record the discovery of the first nest and eggs of the Brown-capped Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte australis*), known to science, together with an account of the incidents contributory to their discovery.

The work, which it was hoped would bring to light the eggs of this species, was undertaken jointly by the Colorado Museum of Natural History and Mr. William C. Bradbury of Denver, now widely known among oölogists as a patron of The Colorado Museum, through whose interest and generosity the superb collection of North American birds eggs has been placed on exhibition at this institution.

Mr. Bradbury had planned to take personal charge of the task but was disappointed through the necessity of a surgical operation, and the work accordingly devolved upon the writer, with Mr. Harold R. Durand of Littleton, Colorado, as Mr. Bradbury's personal representative, and Mr. A. H. Burns of the museum staff.

Through a former somewhat superficial experience with this species, I had become convinced of the lateness of its nesting and commenced the search from the old mining town of Alma, Colorado, on July 9, 1915. In this connection it may be noted that other arctic-alpine birds such as the White-tailed Ptarmigan (*Lagopus l. leucurus*) and Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*) had hatched their eggs at this date. No eggs of any other species were found.

The nest was discovered July 11, 1915, on the southwest exposure of the south peak of Mt. Bross, Park County, Colo., at an elevation of 13,500 feet, or within 600 feet of the summit, the elevation of Mt. Bross being 14,100 feet. This altitude of the nest site here marks the limit of plant growth, the remaining 600 feet, being bare rock, either slides or in the form of outcroppings or small cliffs.

It was in one of these latter that the nest was found, a short cliff about forty feet in height, of Lincoln porphyry, protruding through the upper edge of the schists and shales which occur just below the granite cap. The face of this cliff had suffered considerably from erosion, resulting in "chimneys" and cavities from a few inches to several feet in diameter, and in one of the smaller of these the nest was placed. The hole, forming the upper terminus of a vertical crack, ran back twelve or fourteen inches and was about forty inches from the base of the cliff.

The nest was discovered by flushing the female, which proved to be extremely solicitous, returning repeatedly despite our presence, thus affording me an opportunity to photograph her at the nest entrance. Both male and female were secured — C. M. N. H. Nos. 4723 and 4728.

The bulk of the nest was of dry grass and flower stems neatly and compactly woven together with a considerable quantity of fine moss, and lined with a fine yellow grass and a few feathers from the bird's body, with one White-tailed Ptarmigan feather. It rested well into the silt which covered the bottom of the hole, and the cup was placed to one side, thus giving walls of unequal thickness on two sides. This inequality did not, however, change the general exterior shape which is practically round measuring 4.75" in diameter with a depth over all of 3.00", while the cup measures 2.50" in diameter with a depth of 1.60".

The eggs, three in number, are pure white, slightly glossy, unmarked; ovate pyriform in shape; fresh; measurements in inches: — .91 × .60; .95 × .63; .97 × .62.